



Press Release

Three Years Strong: Louvre Abu Dhabi marks Anniversary with a Film Premiere, New Loans and Acquisitions, Art for Health & Wellbeing and “Reframing Museums” Symposium

- *Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates its third-year anniversary on 11 November 2020*
- *It looks back on its most innovative year-to-date, welcoming new acquisitions to the collection as well as new loans in the galleries by Edgar Degas, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, Claude Monet, Eugène Louis Gillot, Osman Hamdi Bey and Pierre Bonnard; launching major digital initiatives for its communities since January that attracted millions of visitors to the museum’s platforms; commissioning an original short film; and co-convening the virtual symposium “Reframing Museums” with NYU Abu Dhabi*
- *The anniversary will be marked by the launch of Louvre Abu Dhabi’s first original short film—The Pulse of Time—which reflects the museum’s experimental approach to digital presentation of its collections and audience engagement – to be viewed [here](#)*

Abu Dhabi, 11 November 2020: Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates its third-year anniversary on 11 November 2020, reflecting on its most innovative year to date and looking ahead to the future of the institution. In the face of 2020’s unprecedented adversity, the museum met the challenges borne of the global pandemic with agility and heightened creativity, commissioning its first short film, *The Pulse of Time*, and launching more than 20 new digital initiatives, drawing millions of visitors to its growing online community. Louvre Abu Dhabi’s fourth year promises to be equally dynamic, with the museum implementing fresh programmes and unveiling exciting new acquisitions and loans in its galleries.

HE Mohamed Al Mubarak, Chairman of the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi said: “The achievements of Louvre Abu Dhabi in three short years have made a remarkable impact on the emirate’s cultural scene. What began as an agreement between the governments of Abu Dhabi and France has now led to Louvre Abu Dhabi standing as a beacon for our community and the world, sitting at the heart of Abu Dhabi’s cultural offering. Looking back at the past year, I am particularly proud of the way we have adapted to the changing environment, bringing Louvre Abu Dhabi into the homes of millions of people through creative and educational digital initiatives that reflect the museum’s vision to showcase humanity’s cross-cultural connections throughout time.

“Culture provides us with the ability to expand the mind and define the world we live in, and our ongoing acquisitions of exceptional new artworks for the museum’s growing collection aim to continuously offer visitors a fresh glimpse of the vast history of human creativity. In these unprecedented times, that feeling of interrelatedness, of being part of something larger than ourselves, is more important than ever. Louvre Abu Dhabi and its universal message remain a linchpin of Abu Dhabi’s mission to find unity in diversity and make culture a key part of our everyday lives.”

Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi said: “In just three years since we welcomed the first visitors through Louvre Abu Dhabi’s doors, I could not be more proud of what we have accomplished. This past year has certainly been defined by the creation of new opportunities from great challenges. From the very inception of the museum, our mission has been to celebrate stories of cultural

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connections, to help visitors find common threads through art, across cultures, geographies, and time. This purpose has never been more relevant, as we look to new roles and models of what a museum can be. The acquisitions and loans now on view in our galleries are a testament to the strength of our partnerships— from the heart of this region, to Paris, and around the world —continually helping us to create moments of discovery and reward curiosity in each of our visitors. We are eager to welcome you back to our galleries, whether physically or virtually, and we hope you will all join us in celebrating this third anniversary.”

THE GALLERIES

Louvre Abu Dhabi’s curatorial strategy is to tell stories of cultural connections—a form of empathetic viewing that we need now more than ever. These connections are expressed through the juxtaposition of works across cultures, geographies, and time. As part of the museum’s third annual rotation of artworks in the galleries, masterpieces on loan from Musée d’Orsay include, Edgar Degas’ *The Bellelli family* (1858-1869), Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s *Railway bridge in Chatou* (1881), Vincent Van Gogh’s *The caravans, a bohemian camp* (1888), Claude Monet’s *Haystacks, end of summer* (1891), Eugène Louis Gillot’s *The Arrival of the "La Fayette" in New York* (early 20th century), Osman Hamdi Bey’s *Old man before children’s tombs* (1903) and Pierre Bonnard’s *Southern setting, Le Cannet* (1928). Alongside these, the museum has installed a number of maps and precious 14th – 18th century manuscripts loaned by Bibliothèque nationale de France. The manuscripts from Syria, France, Egypt, India and Iran of sacred and scientific texts include scriptures from the foundations of the three Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Several new acquisitions are joining Louvre Abu Dhabi’s growing permanent collection, including a number of artefacts in the earlier chapters of the museum’s chronological timeline of human creativity. *Sumerian Statue of a Female Worshipper* (3rd century Mesopotamia), adds to the discourse on religious beliefs in the museum’s introductory gallery and will go on display alongside *Egyptian Statue of a Kneeling Man* (ca. 4th-7th century Egypt). A Jain sculpture of a *Standing Jina* (11th century India) is a new addition to the museum’s gallery exploring Asian trade routes, and the exceptional new *Feline-shaped Incense Burner* (11th century Central Asia) stands head to head with Louvre Abu Dhabi’s renowned *Lion-shaped aquamanile* (13th century Northern Germany).

Throughout the coming months, visitors will also be able to discover a number of new acquisitions in the later chapters of the museum’s path, including *The Adoration of the Magi* by Pieter Coecke van Aelst (ca. 1523), a biblical portrait of *Saint-Joseph* (also called *Lo Spagnoletto*) by Spanish painter Jusepe de Ribera (before 1647), a series of *Eight Paintings of Foreign Dignitaries* by an anonymous artist (18th century China), as well as Marc Chagall’s exquisite *Between Darkness and Night* (1938-43).

Dr. Souraya Noujaim, Scientific, Curatorial and Collection Director at Louvre Abu Dhabi said: “The past three years have enabled us to research, refine, and develop the cross-cultural threads that underpin the stories of cultural connections told within our permanent galleries. The dynamic nature of our presentation, enabled by the acquisition of exceptional art works, and the continued quality of new loans from our partners, consistently provides our audiences with something new to see. Diversity and universality remain at the heart of our collection, and we are so proud to have been able to engage new audiences by adapting to a hybrid model of physical and virtual presentation that will benefit us for years to come.”

Regional Loans

Existing loans from regional partners have been renewed for the coming year and the expansion of the regional cooperation remains a priority for Louvre Abu Dhabi. In the third year, the regional partners of Louvre Abu Dhabi include: Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, Dubai
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Municipality, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Zayed National Museum, Department of Antiquities and museums of Ras Al Khaimah, the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, the National museum of Oman and the Ministry of Tourism of Saudi Arabia.

Lending to International Exhibitions

Louvre Abu Dhabi's 2019 loan of *The Collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece* (16th century Flanders) to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York represented a major step in the international recognition of the collection. This piece was part of the exhibition *The Last Knight* organised at The Metropolitan Museum of Art between October 2019 and January 2020.

Another loan from Louvre Abu Dhabi's collection included the *Samovar* by Joseph Hoffman (1904 – 1905) to Musée des Arts Décoratifs' (MAD) *Luxes* exhibition in Paris. The artwork was originally presented to the public in Louvre Abu Dhabi's *10,000 Years of Luxury* exhibition in 2019.

Through its programme of temporary exhibitions in collaboration with Agence France-Muséums and French partners, Louvre Abu Dhabi was also able to borrow major artworks from international lenders (Chester Beatty library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Furusiyya Art Foundation) for the exhibition *Furusiyya: The Art of Chivalry Between East and West* (February – October 2020).

THE PULSE OF TIME – LOUVRE ABU DHABI'S ORIGINAL SHORT FILM

YouTube world premiere in English at 8pm GST on Wednesday, 11 November

To mark its third-year anniversary, Louvre Abu Dhabi will premiere its first original short film, *The Pulse of Time*, a 40-minute audio-visual journey bringing to life a story of humanity through art. The film's compelling storytelling, videography and original music composition takes viewers on an immersive journey via the 12 chapters of the museum's galleries. It explores the history of human creativity through more than 200 artworks, revealing stories of cultural connections from pre-history to contemporary times. The film is narrated by well-known figures in three languages—Arabic, by Emirati producer, TV presenter and actor Saoud Al Kaabi, known for his role in the Emirati film *City of Life* (2009); English, by British actor, screenwriter, and film director Charles Dance, known for playing Tywin Lannister in HBO's *Game of Thrones* (2011); and French, by French-Swiss actress Irène Jacob, known for her role in *Three Colours: Red* (1994). The sound creation was commissioned and jointly produced by Alexandre Plank, Radio Producer for the French National Radio channel France Culture and two-time winner of the PRIX ITALIA international competition for radio and TV, and Antoine Richard, winner of the same prize.

Following the premiere on [Louvre Abu Dhabi's YouTube channel](#), *The Pulse of Time* will be available on the [Louvre Abu Dhabi website](#) from 12 November.

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT & AUDIENCE OUTREACH

Louvre Abu Dhabi is continuing to bring its collection and its programmes online, with 120 artworks digitised and available for audiences around the world to discover. In response to the temporary physical closure of the museum galleries this spring, 22 new digital projects and platforms were launched in 2020, including:

- [WE ARE NOT ALONE](#), an audio-visual podcast by Soundwalk Collective
- A collaboration with music streaming service, Anghami, to curate [playlists inspired by the museum's collection](#)
- A 360-degree virtual exhibition tour of ["Furusiyya: The Art of Chivalry between East and West"](#)
- A [webinar for Art for Health & Wellbeing](#) on 22 October

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- New, tailored activities for seniors, students, families, People of Determination, such as:
 - A series for Senior Emiratis that brought objects from the collection to life over Zoom
 - *YouthSpeak*, a quarterly engagement series for school children from the UAE and France to correspond through virtual conversations about the museum's universal narrative and collection
 - Activities for children and families including an eight-week summer programme of [community art challenges](#), that engaged over 24,000 participants online and a ["Make and Play"](#) series, which saw more than 17,000 downloads

Museum Visitors

Despite its closure this spring, the museum reopened in June under the premise of being a "mindful museum", working hard to keep its visitors safe and to offer them a comforting and relevant experience in difficult times. In July, Louvre Abu Dhabi partnered with VPS Healthcare, stationing nurses at the museum to oversee the thermal screening areas and support risk mitigation of COVID-19 by conducting regular audits to ensure that the museum was in compliance with the recommended safety measures and guidelines. Louvre Abu Dhabi received the Department of Culture and Tourism's [Go Safe Certification](#) for demonstrating the highest level of health and safety standards.

Since the reopening, new offers for free admission to the museum have been extended to the pandemic's frontline workers, school teachers, taxi drivers, and youths under 18, with additional discount offers to partners and government employees. Outreach to local audiences through new onsite activities continues to be paired with digital initiatives. In addition to its [Art Club and Teachers Pass](#) membership, the museum has also launched a [Youth Pass](#) to cultivate loyalty and grow its younger community.

Louvre Abu Dhabi received numerous official visits from Heads of State and ministers in its third year, representing countries including the USA, France, Japan, Greece, Mexico, Belgium, Fiji, Slovenia, South Korea, Luxembourg, Spain, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. The museum welcomed many celebrities, who came to experience the museum's iconic architecture and impressive global collection. In November 2019, Louvre Abu Dhabi hosted a French delegation for the official naming of a street after former French President Jacques Chirac.

"Reframing Museums" Symposium: 16-18 November

Louvre Abu Dhabi seeks to be a thought-leader in defining how museums go about agilely adapting to new needs of audiences. Co-convened with Saadiyat Island neighbouring institution NYU Abu Dhabi from 16-18 November 2020, the virtual symposium, *Reframing Museums*, comes at a time when the future of museums as well as arts and culture institutions around the world are being re-examined. The symposium will harness the collective contributions of global scholars, academics, artists, and international museum experts to discuss, interrogate, and reimagine the art museum of the future. Together, attendees will explore the three institutional pillars that typically define museums: Collections, Building/Site, and People.

OPENING OF FOUQUET'S & MARTA BAR

Fouquet's, one of Paris' most iconic restaurants, made its Middle Eastern debut at Louvre Abu Dhabi in February 2020. A symbol of French hospitality, the classic Parisian brasserie has found the perfect home at the art museum on Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island. Just above Fouquet's, marrying effortless elegance with laid-back luxe, is *Marta Bar*, a picture of Parisian perfection. During the day, afternoon tea is served.

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Notes to editors:

Follow Louvre Abu Dhabi on social media: Facebook ([Louvre Abu Dhabi](#)), Twitter ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](#)) and Instagram ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](#)) #LouvreAbuDhabi

For more information on *The Pulse of Time* and Louvre Abu Dhabi's programmes, please visit www.louvreabudhabi.ae. For more information on Louvre Abu Dhabi's collection and acquisitions policies, [please visit our website](#).

Visitor information

The museum is open Tuesday through Sunday, by reserved ticketing, from 10:00am – 6:30pm with last entry at 5:30pm. Pre-purchased tickets are required to visit the museum. E-tickets can be bought via the museum's [website](#).

ABOUT LOUVRE ABU DHABI

Created by an exceptional agreement between the governments of Abu Dhabi and France, Louvre Abu Dhabi was designed by Jean Nouvel and opened on Saadiyat Island in November 2017. The museum is inspired by traditional Islamic architecture and its monumental dome creates a rain of light effect and a unique social space that brings people together.

Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates the universal creativity of mankind and invites audiences to see humanity in a new light. Through its innovative curatorial approach, the museum focuses on building understanding across cultures: through stories of human creativity that transcend civilisations, geographies and times.

The museum's growing collection is unparalleled in the region and spans thousands of years of human history, including prehistoric tools, artefacts, religious texts, iconic paintings and contemporary artworks. The permanent collection is supplemented by rotating loans from 13 French partner institutions, regional and international museums.

Louvre Abu Dhabi is a testing ground for new ideas in a globalised world and champions new generations of cultural leaders. Its international exhibitions, programming and Children's Museum are inclusive platforms that connect communities and offer enjoyment for all.

ABOUT AGENCE FRANCE-MUSÉUMS

Following the intergovernmental agreement between France and the Emirates of Abu Dhabi signed in 2007, Agence France-Muséums, a cultural consulting and engineering agency, was created to work towards the creation of Louvre Abu Dhabi and support the project in all its dimensions (strategic, scientific, cultural, building, human resources, etc.).

Since the opening of the UAE museum in 2017, France Muséums continues to support Louvre Abu Dhabi in four main fields of activity: the management and coordination of loans from French museums for the permanent galleries of the museum, the organisation and production of 4 international exhibitions per year, training of teams and a wide range of consultancy and auditing assignments in all areas of museum management.

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Agence France-Muséums mobilise its teams based in Paris and Abu Dhabi and a network of 17 major French cultural institutions and museums partners: Louvre Abu Dhabi: Musée du Louvre, Centre Pompidou, Musées d'Orsay et de l'Orangerie, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac, Réunion des Musées Nationaux et du Grand Palais (RMN-GP), Château de Versailles, Musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet, Musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen-Âge, École du Louvre, Musée Rodin, Domaine National de Chambord, Musée des Arts Décoratifs (MAD), Cité de la Céramique – Sèvres & Limoges, Musée d'Archéologie nationale – Saint-Germain en Laye, Château de Fontainebleau, and OPPIC (Opérateur du patrimoine et des projets immobiliers de la culture).

ABOUT MUSÉE DU LOUVRE

The Louvre in Paris opened in 1793, during the French Revolution, and from the very beginning was intended to provide inspiration for contemporary art. Courbet, Picasso, Dalí and so many others came to its hallowed halls to admire the old masters, copy them, immerse themselves in masterpieces and improve and fuel their own art. As an ancient royal residence, the Louvre is inextricably linked to eight centuries of French history. As a universal museum, its collections, among the best in the world, span many millennia and miles, from the Americas to Asia. Over 38,000 artworks are grouped into eight curatorial departments, including universally admired works such as the Mona Lisa, the Winged Victory of Samothrace and the Venus de Milo. With 9.6 million guests in 2019, the Louvre is the most visited museum in the world.

ABOUT SAADIYAT CULTURAL DISTRICT

Saadiyat Cultural District on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi, is devoted to culture and the arts. An ambitious cultural undertaking for the 21st century, it will be a nucleus for global culture, attracting local, regional and international guests with unique exhibitions, permanent collections, productions and performances. Its ground-breaking buildings will form a historical statement of the finest 21st century architecture; Zayed National Museum, Louvre Abu Dhabi and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. These museums will complement and collaborate with local and regional arts and cultural institutions including universities and research centres.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM – ABU DHABI

The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) drives the sustainable growth of Abu Dhabi's culture and tourism sectors, fuels economic progress and helps achieve Abu Dhabi's wider global ambitions. By working in partnership with the organisations that define the Emirate's position as a leading international destination, DCT Abu Dhabi strives to unite the ecosystem around a shared vision of the Emirate's potential, coordinate effort and investment, deliver innovative solutions, and use the best tools, policies and systems to support the culture and tourism industries.

DCT Abu Dhabi's vision is defined by the Emirate's people, heritage and landscape. We work to enhance Abu Dhabi's status as a place of authenticity, innovation, and unparalleled experiences, represented by its living traditions of hospitality, pioneering initiatives and creative thought.

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